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ACHIEVEMENTS, SHORTCOMINGS IN WIRE COMMUNICATIONS
 IN SEVEN USSR REPUBLICS

The following report is a compilation of information on the growth of wire communications in seven republics of the USSR, as reported in Soviet newspapers and periodicals in 1952 and January 1953.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.

Latvian SSR

On 31 July 1952, Izvestiya reported that the plan for providing the Latvian SSR with telephone facilities had been completed in 1951. The paper stated that 3,530 telephones had been installed in 1,540 kolkhozes, and that about 3,000 kilometers of telephone lines had been reconstructed in the course of 3 years.(1)

According to Sovetskaya Latvya of 1 April 1952, the Riga telephone exchange was introducing the immediate system for interurban telephone communication.(2)

Lithuanian SSR

On 23 January 1953, Sovetskaya Litva reported that the "order" system used at the Vil'nyus interurban telephone exchange enabled it to handle 1,500 - 2,000 calls a day. The article stated that the exchange has connections with 90 points in the republic and with the largest cities in the USSR.(3)

Ukrainian SSR

I. Kirichenko, the Authorized Representative of the Minister of Communications for the Ukrainian SSR, reported in Pravda Ukrainy on 14 June 1952 that the Ukraine is following the example of the Latvian SSR in putting wired radio centers and telephone exchanges of small capacity in one place and commissioning one worker to operate both. In 1951, the operation of wired radio centers and telephone substations was combined in 77 populated points. Kirichenko

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stated that in Rovenskaya Oblast means of communication including radio, telephone, and telegraph had already been combined in 25 rayon offices. As a result, the staff of workers had been reduced by 50, and 800 square meters of space had been freed. Kirichenko added that the simultaneous operation of communications was to be achieved by July 1952 in 284 rayon offices in the Ukraine, and by the first half of 1953 in all rayon centers. As a result, 1,500 workers were to be freed and used elsewhere.(4)

I. Epifanov, chief of the Kiev interurban telephone exchange, described his exchange as one of the largest communications enterprises in the USSR. He stated that it has the latest equipment and that its capacity is more than three times greater than before World War II.(5)

According to Sovetskiy Svyazist of September 1952, the Administration of the Authorized Representative of the Ministry of Communications for the Ukrainian SSR, together with the Khersonskaya, Nikolayevskaya and Zaporozhskaya oblast administrations of communications, worked to supplement interurban telephone communication of Kherson, Zaporozh'ye, and Kakhovka. They satisfied urgent requests for the installation of telephones and wired radio speakers. The article stated that the Main Administration for Construction of the South Ukrainian and North Crimean Canal had put an automatic telephone exchange with great capacity into operation. It reported that switchboards had been put in operation and the condition of the telephone network improved in many rayon centers along the line of construction, such as Vasil'yevka, Snigirevka, Oktyabr', and others. Thousands of telephones had been installed at construction, 70 kilometers of lines built, and 370 kilometers of wires suspended.

Sovetskiy Svyazist pointed out that work was under way to increase the capacity of telephone communications from many construction points to Moscow, Kiev, Khar'kov, and Dnepropetrovsk. It explained that a total of eight departments and three agencies of communications were to be opened in 1952, and city telephone exchanges expanded in Snigirevka, Berislav, and Oktyabr'. The article concluded with the statement that this enumeration of work being conducted was far from complete.(6)

Georgian SSR

On 16 September 1952, Zarya Vostoka reviewed the progress of communications in the Georgian SSR for 1951 and for 7 months of 1952, as follows: The length of telegraph-telephone lines grew by 14 percent, and the length of non-ferrous telephone circuits increased by 57 percent /presumably over the length in operation on 1 January 1951/. Twenty-four hour telephone service was introduced between Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi, Sukhumi, Stalinir, Gori, Khashuri, and other towns and rayon centers. Improved fast operating equipment was introduced, and the number of intra-rayon telephone exchanges increased. In 21 towns, the telephone network was reconstructed.

Zarya Vostoka commented, however, that despite all these accomplishments the work of the Tbilisi automatic exchange was going badly. The exchanges in Kutaisi, Sukhumi, Batumi, Stalinir, and other towns were extremely overworked and unsatisfactory. The article closed with a summons to Leshavili, the Authorized Representative of the Ministry of Communications for the Georgian SSR, to correct the situation.(7)

Armenian SSR

During 1952, complaints were directed against telephone facilities in Yerevan, capital of the Armenian SSR.

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On 1 August 1952, a reader of Kommunist, N. Kazaryan, sent a letter to the paper complaining that there were great inadequacies in the work of the Yerevan telephone network. He described the situation as follows: Scores of people turn to Tokmadzhyan, director of the telephone network, with a request for a telephone, but usually receive the answer that there are no numbers free. On other occasions, he sends "importune" visitors to Engineer A. Zarusbenko, who can install a telephone even without the permission of the director for a special fee. People who do not really need telephones receive them, and those who have real need for them do not.

Kazaryan insisted that there are free numbers. He charged that telephone equipment is not taken care of properly and is lost. He declared that Tokmadzhyan had reported a deficit of 1,745 rubles for the first quarter 1952 instead of an actual deficit of 42,500 rubles.

Kazaryan continued as follows: In December 1951, the director gave instructions for publishing a telephone book, but the work on it was poor. Workers artfully exceeded the established fee by two times, which brought the cost of the directory to 16,100 rubles. In addition, the directory contained mistakes and many numbers were omitted. The subscribers division has failed for several years to make up cards for owners of 60 apartment telephones and for 2-3 years has not collected fees from them. As a result, the state has not received 38,000 rubles. The former cashier of the network, O. Kristofaryan, embezzled 3,745 rubles, while the bookkeeper, O. Simonyan, embezzled 972 rubles in April and 400 rubles in May. Not one of them has been brought to trial. On the contrary, the director of the telephone network, M. Tokmadzhyan, made an award of 150 rubles to Simonyan on 25 May.

Kazaryan charged that, when these facts were brought to the attention of the Authorized Representative of the Ministry of Communications for the Armenian SSR, T. Minasyan, he came to their defense. Kazaryan summoned the republic prosecutor to take an interest in the activity of M. Tokmadzhyan and other workers.(8)

On 2 September 1952, Kommunist confirmed the charges that there had been irregularities in the operations of the Yerevan city telephone network. On 27 August, T. Minasyan, the Authorized Representative of the Ministry of Communications for the Armenian SSR, reported that the questions raised had been discussed and decisions taken for bringing order to the telephone network. The paper expressed the hope that the measures taken would correct the situation.(9)

Kazakh SSR

According to Izvestiya of 27 February 1952, there are 40 branch stations of communications in Alma-Ata. Only in 24 are there points for the dispatch and receipt of telegrams, while trunk-call offices exist in only two. Izvestiya complained that telegrams are not delivered, particularly during evening hours, and that their texts are often distorted.

On an average day, one city branch station of communications failed to deliver 43 telegrams in the prescribed period of time. Izvestiya noted that since the beginning of 1952, 107 papers and journals had been sent to the wrong addresses. The interurban telephone exchange failed to fulfill orders for a whole week. Izvestiya complained that nothing was being done to improve the station.(10)

On 24 October 1952, R. Vizel'tir, chief engineer of the Karaganda Administration of the Ministry of Communications reported in Kazakhstanskaya Pravda that the Osakarovka-Kiyevka telephone line had been put in operation by the

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beginning of spring field work. Communications workers had completed the construction of two new telephone cables: Karaganda-Dzhezkazgan, which is 600 kilometers long, and Karaganda-Karkaralinsk-Kuvskaya, which is 350 kilometers long. The Karaganda-Karkaralinsk line was completed in record time at great financial savings.

According to Vizel'tir, the construction of these main cables provides the possibility of telephone communication between Karaganda and the rayon centers of Dzhezkazganskiy and Zhana-Arkinskiy rayons, and the new industrial centers of Kengir, Novaya-Rudnaya, and Uspenka. In addition, he continued, they have created the necessary conditions for providing the rayon centers of Shetek, Ulu-Tay, and Aktogay with telephone facilities. Visel'tir stated that after the completion of the 70-kilometer Zharyk-Shetsk line, all attention was concentrated on the Dzhezkazgan-Ulu-Tay line, which was put in operation by the opening of the 19th Party Congress. According to Vizel'tir, communications workers subsequently concentrated all their attention on a new 400-kilometer line between Karaganda and Aktogay. When this line is completed, Karaganda will have telegraph and telephone connections with all the rayons of the oblast.(11)

Uzbek SSR

Pravda Vostoka of 31 October 1952 printed a complaint against the Authorized Representative of the Ministry of Communications for the Uzbek SSR for failing to do anything about communications in Muynakskiy Rayon. The complaint declared that the significance of radio communications is heightened wherever it is impossible to install wire communications. Practice has demonstrated, the article continued, that with the aid of the Urozhay broadcasting station, telephone communication can be achieved for a distance of 50-70 kilometers. It charged, however, that several rayon offices do not use the Urozhay radio stations for intra-rayon communication. It added that in Muynakskiy Rayon, for example, it would be possible to connect kolkhozes and village soviets with the rayon center, particularly in the region embracing the southern end of the Aral Sea and the delta of the Amu-Darya, which is broken up by expanses of water.(12)

According to Sovetskiy Svyazist of January 1952, telephone communication had been established between Nukus and Takhia-Tash.(13)

Turkmen SSR

On 29 October 1952, Turkmenkaya Iskra criticized the directory of the Ashkhabad city telephone network. The article pointed out that since the directory was put out in March 1950, many changes have been made so that of the 1,500 numbers listed in the directory only 300-400 are correct. It stated that the accuracy of the remaining numbers can only be established through the information bureau. Turkmenkaya Iskra urged the leaders of the Ashkhabad telephone exchange to publish a corrected edition of the directory.(14)

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3. Vil'nyus, Sovetskaya Litva, 23 Jan 53
4. Kiev, Pravda Ukrainy, 14 Jun 52

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5. Moscow, Sovetskiy Svyazist, No 6, Jun 52
6. Ibid., No 9, Sep 52
7. Tbilisi, Zarya Vostoka, 16 Sep 52
8. Yerevan, Kommunist, 1 Aug 52
9. Ibid., 2 Sep 52
10. Izvestiya, 22 Feb 52
11. Alma-Ata, Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, 24 Oct 52
12. Tashkent, Pravda Vostoka, 31 Oct 52
13. Sovetskiy Svyazist, No 1, Jan 52
14. Ashkhabad, Turkmenskaya Iskra, 29 Oct 52

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